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## MASTER FILE

### DSSD CENSUS 2000 PROCEDURES AND OPERATIONS MEMORANDUM SERIES #O-2

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Attention:              Decennial Design, Policy and Management Branch

Through:              Howard Hogan *Howard Hogan*  
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From:                   Kimball Jonas *KJ*  
                                 Decennial Statistical Studies Division

Subject:                Observation of Facility Questionnaire Personal Visit Training in  
                                 Baltimore, MD

#### I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Facility Questionnaire (FQ) operation is to identify, locate, and classify group quarters (GQs) before Census 2000, and gather information that will assist in the enumeration of their residents. The FQ is the instrument for gathering this information.

The attempt is made to administer the FQ to all special places (the administrative entities containing GQs) by Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviews (CATI), but not all special places can be reached by phone during the CATI portion of the operation, and the administrators of some special places strongly prefer to make the information available only in a face-to-face contact. The FQ is administered to these special places through the Facility Questionnaire Personal Visit (FQPV). On May 13, the Special Place Regional Technician for the Philadelphia Regional Census Center (RCC) trained ten FQPV interviewers.

## II. OBSERVATION OF TRAINING

### A. Overview

The FQPV training began at 8 a.m. on the morning of May 13. The ten trainees were all veterans of previous Census operations, particularly the Address Listing and Block Canvassing operations. As a result, the Orientation and Payroll sections of the training were skipped, and the training was consolidated into a single day, rather than the day and a half called for in the Training Guide. Due to concerns about doing the geocoding training in the afternoon when people are less attentive, the trainer chose to begin the day by covering the Geocoding Guide, then moved on to discussing the FQ operation and the questionnaire itself. After lunch questions were taken and answered, interviewing tips were discussed, and the members of the class role-played practice interviews, finishing up shortly before 3 p.m.

The training went smoothly, although there were some minor moments of confusion caused by (a) confusing aspects of the training materials<sup>1</sup>, (b) the FQ itself, and (c) the trainer's decision to begin, rather than end, with the geocoding. (The materials were designed with the assumption that geocoding would be covered last.)

### B. Geocoding

The class moved through the geocoding training quickly and smoothly (not surprising, given that most of the trainees had done address listing already), but were occasionally tripped up by references in the Geocoding Guide to the particulars of special places, GQs, and the FQ itself, and by some discrepancies between the content of the Geocoding Guide and the material in the Geocoding Job Aid. However, these acted more as minor disruptions in the flow of the training than as major impediments to understanding.

I noted the following minor errors and discrepancies with the training materials:

1. The Geocoding Job Aid included a map legend on page 2-7. The Geocoding Guide (pages 18-19) described a number of features of the Job Aid's map legend that were not actually present in the legend.

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<sup>1</sup>In addition to the Facility Questionnaire (D-351), the training materials included the Facility Questionnaire Personal Visit Workbook, D-697.31 ("Workbook"); the FQPV Checklist, D-597.32; the Special Place Operations Geocoding Job Aid, D-565.30 ("Geocoding Job Aid"), a SP/GQ Assignment Area Map ("Assignment Map"), and other materials not cited here. The content of the trainer's lectures came from the FQPV Geocoding Training Guide, D-665.30 ("Geocoding Guide"), and the Guide for Training Facility Questionnaire Personal Visit Interviewers, D-697.30 ("Training Guide").

2. The areas on the assignment maps requiring map spots were described as light gray in the Geocoding Guide (page 20). The class counted four distinct shades of gray on the assignment map in front of them.
3. The Geocoding Job Aid (page 5-5) gave an incorrect answer to a map spotting problem, giving 9001 instead of 9001(2) as the map spot number of a GQ with an embedded housing unit.
4. The FQPV Checklist omitted any mention of geocoding. I have already spoken with the Field Division's Decennial Data Collection Branch about this, and they notified the Special Place Regional Technicians to have trainees write in a 'geocode, if necessary' task line on the checklist.

There was also substantial confusion over the nature of the situation that the map spotting exercise represented, which seemed to have less to do with the exercise itself than the fact that the training on the FQ had not yet taken place.

#### C. Facility Questionnaire

The class also moved smoothly, for the most part, through the introduction to the FQ operation and the walk-through of the FQ itself. Here again, problems that arose were on the same low level as before, with the confusions this time being primarily due to the complexity of the FQ. In particular, trainees were unclear about the following:

1. The shading on part of the blank for the phone number in Question 17.
2. The meaning of Questions 18c and 19 of the FQ ("Is your facility part of a larger organization...?") The confusing nature of these questions has been documented before.<sup>2</sup>

Since it is far too late to change the FQ, I have no recommendation other than to clarify the meanings of these questions to the Special Place Regional Technicians. This section also mentions that the minimum information is shown on the FQPV checklist, but the checklist and the lecture differ substantially on the minimum information.<sup>3</sup> This discrepancy needs to be rectified in training, to avoid confusion in the field.

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<sup>2</sup>Memorandum, "Report from Special Places Facility Questionnaire Cognitive Research: Census 2000 Dress Rehearsal," Laureen H. Moyer, Center for Survey Methods Research, Statistical Research Division, June 19, 1998.

<sup>3</sup>The lecture lists as essential the name of the special place, addresses of the special place and all GQs, and geocodes of all living quarters at the special place. The checklist says essential coverage consists of the base section of the FQ (which gathers no information about the individual GQs at the special place).

**D. Interviewing Tips and Practice Interviews**

These sections of the training went smoothly and uneventfully. The trainees appeared to become considerably more comfortable with the FQ during the practice interviews.

**III. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

By and large, the FQPV training went very well. It was particularly good to see that the Philadelphia RCC was able to find FQPV interviewers who were already familiar with Census 2000 field operations.

I recommend the following:

- A. Conduct the geocoding training after Sections C and D of the FQPV training, covering the FQ operation and the FQ itself.
- B. The Special Populations Working Group should reach a decision on what constitutes a minimum acceptable interview, and the Special Place Regional Technicians should be instructed to modify the training accordingly.
- C. The Decennial Data Collection Branch of Field Division should alert the Special Place Regional Technicians to the following:
  - 1. The discrepancies listed in Section II. B of this memorandum, so that they can adjust their training lectures accordingly.
  - 2. The intended meaning of "larger organization" in questions 18c and 19 of the FQ, and the absence of meaning of the shading of the phone number in question 17 of the FQ.

cc:

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